

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00079 041617Z
ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 079

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU
SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS: AEGEAN NEGOTIATIONS

1. IN MY FIRST PRIVATE MEETING OF THE NEW YEAR WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS, WE MADE A TOUR D'HORIZON TODAY.
HE FILLED ME IN ON FURTHER RECENT DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS
BETWEEN ATHENS AND ANKARA, SUBSEQUENT TO HIS BILATERAL
WITH CAGLAYANGIL IN BRUSSELS DECEMBER 11, CONSISTENT
WITH INFORMATION WE AND OTHER POSTS HAVE ALREADY
RECEIVED AND REPORTED.

2. BITSIOS THEN SUMMARIZED THE AGREED SCHEDULE OF
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND NEGOTIATING SESSIONS.

A) AIR SPACE TALKS.

LATER THIS WEEK THE GREEK DELEGATION CHIEF TO THESE
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TALKS, AMBASSADOR DENNIS CARAYANNIS, WHO IS IN ATHENS,
WILL HAVE A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE NEW TURKISH
AMBASSADOR HERE (TEZEL) AND MAKE WHAT BITSIOS CHARACTERIZED
AS "A FINAL OFFER" TO RESOLVE THE LAST REMAINING
DIFFERENCES ON THE AEGEAN AIR SPACE QUESTION. HE SAID
HE THOUGHT A FORMULA HAD BEEN FOUND THAT SHOULD BE
ACCEPTABLE TO THE TURKS AND THAT IF AGREEMENT COULD BE

REACHED THROUGH THESE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS IN ATHENS A
SUBSEQUENT MEETING WOULD BE ARRANGED BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES' DELEGATIONS IN PARIS OR SOME OTHER
THIRD COUNTRY CAPITAL TO NEGOTIATE AND SIGN THE FINAL
UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED, WHICH WOULD PERMIT A REOPENING
OF THE AEGEAN AIR SPACE.

B) MINISTERIAL MEETING.

HE SAID THAT HE AND CAGLAYANGIL HAD ARRANGED TO MEET
ON SATURDAY MORNING, JANUARY 29TH IN STRASBOURG
FOLLOWING THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING. HE EXPECTED THEY
WOULD REVIEW THE PROGRESS MADE ON THE AIR SPACE TALKS AND
GIVE FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THEIR TWO DELEGATIONS WHO
WOULD BE ABOUT TO RESUME THE CONTINENTAL SHELF
NEGOTIATIONS.

C) CONTINENTAL SHELF.

AGREEMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN REACHED TO RESUME THE
CONTINENTAL SHELF NEGOTIATIONS TO BEGIN IN LONDON
ON MONDAY, JANUARY 31 (NOT BERN THIS TIME). AMBASSADOR
JOHN TZOUNIS WILL LEAD THE GREEK DELEGATION AS IN THE
PAST AND IS PREPARING TO REMAIN IN LONDON FOR THESE TALKS
FOR ABOUT A WEEK. IT IS EXPECTED THAT TURKISH AMBASSADOR
BILGE WILL PROCEED TO LONDON AND HEAD THE TURKISH
DELEGATION AS BEFORE.

3. BITSIOS SAID HE WAS SOMEWHAT ENCOURAGED BY HIS RECENT
CONTACTS WITH CAGLAYANGIL AND THAT HE WAS ENTERING 1977
WITH MORE HOPE AND OPTIMISM ABOUT GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS
THAN HE HAD HAD FOR A LONG TIME. HE SAID HE WAS QUITE
SATISFIED WITH THE WELL-ORGANIZED AND SYSTEMATIC DIALOGUE
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THAT WAS TAKING PLACE BETWEEN ANKARA AND ATHENS AND BELIEVED
THAT THE NEGOTIATING MACHINERY WAS IN PLACE TO BRING ABOUT
SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS THAT HAVE
BEEN PLAGUING GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS. (COMMENT: HE DID
NOT INCLUDE CYPRUS IN THIS, HOWEVER.)
KUBISCH

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